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DELPHINIUMS

OF THE

LYONDEL GARDENS

LEON H. LEONIAN, hybridizer

TOMORROW IS TODAY AT THE LYONDEL GARDENS

The magic of seeds crossed pollinized
by hand the Lyondel Way brings
to you today the delphiniums
of tomorrow

Season of 1941-42

LYONDEL GARDENS

Morgantown - - - West Virginia

SOME PLAIN TALK

THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY must have spent all of his life sleeping if we are to believe the innumerable markers along the highway proclaiming to the world that "George Washington slept here." Every two-by-four delphinium grower who ever rubbed pollen on a stigma must be a glorified Watkin Samuel if we are to believe his hypertrophied exuberance concerning the superb quality of his "creations." If someone were to erect a shrine along one of our national highways to proclaim to the world that "**GEORGE WASHINGTON DID NOT SLEEP HERE**" and if he charged a modest admission, he would soon be financially independent. However it was not with the intention of catching the sort of sap who immortalized Barnum that I have maintained right along that the Lyondel Hybrids are not the world's best; nor was I exercising any super-salesmanship, although I have been accused of it. I sincerely believe that there is no such thing as world's best delphinium, or automobile, or mouse trap. Perfection is a dreadful thing because it arrests progress. Nor is any strain of delphinium perfect; the breeder who claims such a thing has already died but is too dumb to lie down.

Having tested every major strain of delphinium available, and also being a fair-minded person, I have repeatedly disagreed with some of my more enthusiastic customers who maintain that the Lyondels are far ahead of all other strains. Now these customers challenge me either to point out the strain that is as least as good as mine, or stop talking nonsense and let them purchase their Lyondels in peace. I accept the challenge and name the hand-pollinated seeds of Pacific Hybrids developed by Frank Reinelt. Having been privileged to test on a large scale not only the regular lines but also the seeds and plants of many pre-introduction varieties, I am in better position than most to evaluate and to recommend to my customers this youngest strain of delphinium that is now sweeping the country. I realize that it is not the orthodox thing to give favorable publicity to one's business rival, especially during a sales talk, but I wonder if all of us would not be much better off in business as well as in politics if we were to cut out adverse criticism and mud slinging and were, instead, to point out the better qualities of our business and political rivals. Running them and their products down, mud slinging, frothing at the mouth and arousing bitter passions indicate a hidden realization that the other fellow has the goods and that he may beat us in a fair race. I doubt if adverse criticism, mud slinging, or passionate oratory have ever gained a substantial number of intelligent customers or voters. The public is beginning to realize that the quality of goods or of candidates cannot be determined by words but by actual performance only. As I believe in the quality of Lyondels, I have no fear of any rivals. I can praise my nearest rival without fear of losing customers. I can assure all those who have grown nothing by Lyondels that they will find many pleasant surprises in the hand pollinated seeds of the Pacific Hybrids, just as I assure those who have never grown Lyondels that they will find many pleasant surprises in my strain. Experienced gardeners know that the breeder weaves something of his own personality into his strain, and that since no two persons are alike, no two strains of delphinium can be identical; consequently they shop about in search of something different. I realize that sooner or later everyone of my customers will try other strains of delphinium, just as the customers of other breeders will, sooner or later, try the Lyondels. If I do not have something to hold their attention, they will drift away and fail to return. Therefore if I am wideawake, I will see to it that the Lyondels will always have something that the others lack, just as I hope that the others will develop features that the Lyondels lack. Such a thing is vital to me as in a way my rivals help me to better my own strain by developing qualities that my strain lacks. But no one breeder, no matter how well equipped or how much

gifted, can ever corner quality. All signs indicate that the Lyondel Hybrids have retained their hold on the gardening public; thus far every year the demand for Lyondels has been far greater than the supply; but what is more significant is the fact that most of those who buy my seeds are old customers and experienced, keen delphinarians. The reason why they stay with me is not because they like the way my hair curls.

The 1941 crop of Lyondels is going to be far ahead of anything that has been developed and sent out by me. It is surprising that delphinium can be improved so rapidly that last year's aristocrats become this year's discards. But such is the case, and this is one reason why the named varieties are already senile on the day they are introduced, and seedlings continue to hold the stage.

SOME LYONDEL FIRSTS

THE Lyondel Gardens were THE FIRST to distribute seeds produced by controlled pollination. Later the more progressive breeders realized the value of this and followed suit with the result that high quality seeds are now available to all, and the poor can have as fine delphiniums as the rich. Before the practice of cross pollination was introduced, gardeners congratulated themselves if ten percent of their seedlings proved worth saving; now they complain if ten percent of their seedlings prove to be mediocre things.

The Lyondel Gardens were THE FIRST to make available the matchless self colors that are finding so much favor among the more discriminating gardeners. Shades of lilac, lavender, orchid, purple, reddish violet, and smoky colors of undescribable nature, all absolutely self, emanated from the Lyondels Gardens to grace gardens in this country and abroad. Similarly, clear colors, brilliant, sparkling shades radiating from the Lyondel Hybrids brought a new concept of color quality in delphinium.

Three inch flowers, three and one fourth inch flowers, three and three-quarter inch flowers, and yes, four inch flowers that were myths, materialized in the gardens of those who made their purchases from the Lyondel Gardens.

A new vigor, and a greater ruggedness were woven into the constitution of Lyondel Hybrids to enable them better to withstand the unfavorable conditions of many parts of our country.

I am not listing the foregoing accomplishments in a boastful spirit; on the contrary I stand in all humility before the forces of nature that alone are responsible for every quality in all living things. Also I stand in deep appreciation of other breeders whose accomplishments enabled me to make my own little contribution to the cause of better delphiniums.

SOWING DIRECTIONS*

Mix and screen equal parts of soil and sand. Place this mixture in pots, flats, or frames. Shake a pinch of Semesan (may be purchased from your dealer of spray materials) with the seeds and sow in rows right on the surface of the soil. SOW THICKLY. Press the seeds firmly into the soil by a piece of two-by-four and cover not deeper than twice the diameter of the seeds; this means very, very shallow covering, and is vital. Pulverized peat or sphagnum moss is preferable for covering the seeds. Spread a damp cheesecloth on the surface of the soil and water GENTLY BUT THOROUGHLY. Cover the whole thing with burlap and keep it shaded and cool. Lath frames will be of great help. USE ONLY RAIN, SPRING, OR WELL WATER as many city waters are chlorinated and hard, and consequently toxic. When the seedlings begin to come up, remove the cheesecloth but tack the burlap to the frame of the flats or seedbed. Where summers are warm, it may be

* For those who do not care for seed propagation I have field grown, husky seedlings. See page 7.

necessary to keep the seedlings shaded until September. In all cases the seedlings should be hardened to direct sunlight gradually. Should there be signs of damping-off, water with 0.25% Semesan solution (a fourth part of Semesan to 100 parts of water). Avoid soil sterilization with hot water or heat of any sort. Chemical sterilizations may easily be harmful in the hands of uninitiated.

Seeds purchased late in season should be kept in tightly stoppered vials and stored in the refrigerator until time of sowing.

NOW I LET MY CUSTOMERS DO THE TALKING

Once again, as in the past years, I am quoting excerpts from the most recent letters written to me by some of my customers. They write to me without being asked; they write because they are satisfied. My customers are my only advertisement. You don't see the advertisement of Lyondel Gardens in any of the garden magazines, yet I have all the customers I can serve. The demand for the Lyondel seeds is so heavy that every year my seeds are completely sold out; often before they have been harvested. All those who have purchased Lyondel seeds have created a center of attraction where flower lovers aggregate. From such centers come the new customer. Those who have not seen Lyondel Hybrids in bloom may derive their "impulse" from the excerpts printed here.

Anderson, Ind., July 5, 1940

"*Plants from seeds obtained from you last August have produced the most magnificent spikes this June. Hundreds of people who have visited my garden have joined me in proclaiming them the most superb delphiniums of the time.*"—Florence Wolfe.

Scappoose, Oregon, June, 1940

"*Your seeds always have something new to offer to any fine delphinium grower.*"—Mrs. L. W. Wheeler.

Winnetka, Ill., July, 1940

"*The outstanding single plant in any group I have seen here is one from your Dark Bicolor series. The plant is a perfect pyramid 81 inches high with 41 inch spike. Spikes spiral, florets averaging 2½ inches, and the base of the spike 7½ inches in diameter. A lilac self plant from your seed had flowers 3¼ inches across.*"—Bruce Van Cleave.

Youngstown, Ohio, July 1, 1940

We are unable to express in words our appreciation to you for having introduced Lyondel Hybrid Delphiniums. For hardiness and sturdiness they just can't be beaten.—Terrace Gardens Company.

Niagara Falls, N. Y., July 21, 1940

Flowers from your seed have been sensational and have given pleasure to the whole neighborhood.—Marshall E. Stewart.

Petersburg, Va., July 30, 1940

My Lyondels have been the loveliest flowers I have ever seen. Some of my plants have grown six feet tall, with flowers three inches across.—Mrs. Henry Southworth.

Sharon, Conn., July 29, 1940

This year your delphiniums have been perfectly superb. I am a very old lady and these flowers have been a great joy to me.—Mrs. W. S. Pyle.

Bethel, Ohio, July, 1940.

It is ten years since I ordered my first seed from you. I again endorse their worth by ordering more.—L. E. Peart.

Toronto, Canada, Aug. 27, 1940

We have grown good delphiniums here for the past fifteen years and have seen some wonderful spikes at the Canadian National Exhibition, but the bloom from your seed far surpassed anything previously seen anywhere. The first thing that impressed me was the clearness of color, the intense beauty of the flower, especially the light lavenders, something that I hoped to see some day but never had up to now. Next come the size and the beautiful shape of the flowers and spikes; tall, pyramidal spikes over seven feet tall and with flowers up to three and three quarter inches across.—Ernest B. Pegg.

Northfield, Minn., July 11, 1940

The delphiniums from your last year's seeds are perfectly stunning, the loveliest and the largest I have ever had.—Elizabeth Nutting.

Northbrook, Ill., August 1, 1940

I have had excellent results with your seeds, and the flowers they have given me have been beautiful. Yours is by far the finest delphinium today.—Northbrook Dahlia Gardens.

Waterbury, Conn., August 12, 1940

The seeds I received from you were sown on August 3, and today, nine days later the seedlings are popping through the ground; the very earliest I have ever germinated delphinium seeds.

I guess I must be a nut, for I cannot keep out of the garden when I am at home; and many times I have gone out in the rain to give my delphiniums the once over. Their colors are indescribable. The phrases "exotic" or "heavenly" and the like are trite. The nearest new phrase I can think of is "unearthly beauty;" and that is inadequate. Some of my Lyondels attained a height of seven feet, and again I had flowers 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter; many were three inches.—L. H. Hill.

Schenectady, N. Y., August 20, 1940

The delphiniums from your seeds are much admired by all who see them.—John A. Henry.

Perintown, Ohio, June 20, 1940

The maiden flowers from your seed are perfectly beautiful, with a promise of magnificent blooms next year. I had never before seen pure lilac self, and your whites are outstanding, as they all are.—Mrs. G. S. Groesbeck.

Logan, Utah, June 6, 1940

I am convinced that you are either the best salesman in the world or the biggest bluffer in the United States; or are you? My sticking with you is evidence that I think you have "It" both in words and seeds.—O. A. Garff.

Youngstown, Ohio, July, 1940

My delphiniums from your seeds are glorious, much finer than other strains, and always producing some breath-taking combinations that amaze me.—Mrs. Charles T. Gaither.

Elizabeth, Pa., August 20, 1940

I had wonderful delphiniums from your 1939 seeds; long spikes, double flowers and a beautiful variety of colors.—John Andrews.

Dayton, Ohio, July, 1940

The seed I purchased from you germinated almost 100 percent and produced several outstanding plants, and no poor ones at all.—Mrs. John W. Aull.

Wheeling, W. Va., Sept. 23, 1940

I have 129 seedlings from your 100-seed packet. Pretty good, don't you think? —Mrs. Russell B. Bailey.

Fishkill, N. Y., July, 1940

I have grown your delphiniums with great success and pleasure for the last ten years.—Mrs. Stephen W. Blodgett.

Deerfield, Ill., August 15, 1940

The delphiniums which I saw at your home in Morgantown were a treat; the colors so lovely and the size spectacular.—Mary Black.

Parkersburg, W. Va., July 29, 1940

I have 110 plants from your seeds. They are now blooming the second time and are the finest I have ever seen.—Chas. L. Boyers.

St. Paul, Minn., July 5, 1940

My delphiniums from your seeds are gorgeous this year. May you live a long life and bring us more beauties as you have in the past.—Mrs. Julia E. Cleary

Biltmore, N. C., June 26, 1940

I took some of your seeds to my daughter in England. She wrote me that she obtained flowers 3½ inches across.—Mrs. B. S. Colburn.

Bristol, R. I., Sept. 3, 1940

At the Berkshire Garden Center in Stockbridge, Mass., we were tremendously impressed by the delphiniums from the Lyondel Gardens. Truly, they were the most beautiful we have ever seen.—Mrs. M. T. Donovan.

Oswego, N. Y., Oct. 1, 1940

My plants from your 1939 seeds bloomed and they are the largest and the most beautiful ones I have.—Jessie G. Dunlop.

Askov, Minn., July 5, 1940

I cannot help but comment on the delphiniums raised from your seed. They are grand, not just swell and good.—Ferndale Nursery.

Waterford, Conn., Oct. 11, 1940

I have raised some of your delphiniums for a lady here and they are the finest I have yet seen.—John Monteith.

Oneida, N. Y., June 24, 1940

I wish that you could have seen the white delphinium raised from your seed. The flowers were at least three inches in diameter and PURE white—the most gorgeous thing I have ever seen either in my garden or in others.—J. N. Milnes.

Seattle, Wash., June 24, 1940

One of your seedlings with light lilac flowers 3¼ inches across, with light khaki bee and good spike is now in bloom; it certainly is a very much admired, beautiful delphinium.—Jas. M. McConahey.

East Hampton, L. I., July 30, 1940

The plants from your last year's seeds are superb.—Mrs. W. A. Lockwood.

Erie, Penna., Sept. 10, 1940

I have grown delphiniums from four of the best breeders, including yours, and whenever I see a group of visitors in the delphinium plot, they are always admiring the Lyondels. From your seeds we have had seedlings six feet tall and with 3½ inch flowers grown under ordinary field conditions. I am growing only Lyondels this year. You sure have the goods.—Marbatju Gardens.

Chattanooga, Tenn., June, 1940

I think everyone of your seeds germinated and I had beautiful flowers at my summer home in North Carolina.—Mrs. F. W. Lupton.

Villa Park, Ill., Aug. 13, 1940

I have seen delphiniums from your seeds grown here in Villa Park, and they certainly did surpass anything I ever saw in delphinium line.—Ray Kennedy.

Detroit, Mich., June 17, 1940

Your strain is the chief pride of my garden during the summer months, and I am looking forward to the continuation of that pleasure.—W. A. P. John.

Racine, Wise., July 13, 1940

As always, yours are the top-notchers of all the delphiniums I raise. Your whites are exceptionally fine.—John J. Johnson.

SEED OFFERINGS FOR SUMMER OF 1941 AND SPRING OF 1942

EACH YEAR'S CROP of seeds represents new crosses made between new plants. This scheme insures my customer newer and better things, and I can assure those who purchased seeds from me last year that they will find newer surprises among the seedlings resulting from 1941 crosses. The only thing that has not changed and will not change is the price; everything else is brand new. Seeds will be ready at the end of July.

Dark
1. Darkest color series. Last year this was offered as a novelty. Plants in this group are shy seeders and those who order from it should indicate a second choice. The flowers are not large, nor are the spikes spectacular, but the color is something to dream about. The darkest I have seen in delphiniums, beautifully finished and full of vivid sparkle. Both selfs and bicolors are present.

2. Dark bicolors. The outers dark blue, the inners dark purple with contrasty eyes, this group is among the most showy and the best developed of all delphiniums. Flowers up to 3½ inches, spikes three and four feet in solid flowers. But of course as in all cases, not all the flowers will be large nor all the spikes will be long.

3. Light bicolors. The outers are light blue, the inners mauve or lavender; the eyes are of different colors, and the ensemble is most charming. Some of the largest flowers and longest spikes are here, also a great variety of floral patterns that will charm everyone.

4. Soft self colors. This series represents a Lyondel achievement that has gone to the very heart of the gardening public. Lilac, mauve, orchid, and smoky shades, all absolutely self, and so delicate yet so clear as to seem ethereal, will bring to your garden an atmosphere made of dreams.

5. Deeper self colors. Another Lyondel triumph representing the deeper shades of the foregoing group. Here are solid shades of bluish purple, reddish purple, deep orchids, smoky plums, and occasionally mosaic patterns of reddish purple and prominent white veins resembling some Japanese iris. Here is what I like to call a delphinium and a half.

6. Pure blue self. Spectacular advances have been made in this group. No longer need we lament the lack of delphinium blue in the modern hybrids. Long spikes, large flowers, pure colors, and contrasty eyes, together with tough stems and a splendid constitution make this a "must have" group.

7. Pure Whites. For contrast in the yard or in a vase of delphinium the whites are supreme. The quality of the white is becoming clearer, the spikes are longer, the constitution and disease resistance better.

8. Mixture of seven color groups. Here are represented all of the foregoing seven groups and some others that are still too rare to be offered by themselves, or too different to be classified under any of the seven headings.

Price, \$2.50 per packet of at least 100 seeds. West Virginia customers must add 2% sales tax. One packet is the minimum amount sold. No special mixtures made for anyone.

THE CONNOISSEURS' SERIES

The coming delphiniums of the Lyondel Gardens cast a brilliant shadow in this series. Both pollen and seed parents are entirely new, blooming for the first time in the summer and fall of 1941. In order to qualify, they must surpass everything among my older plants. This will enable some of their progenies to be ahead of everything offered prior to 1942. However this series will contain a larger percentage of ordinary things than my standard series; but because the better things are so far ahead in quality, no true delphinarian should deprive himself of the thrills that the Connoisseurs' Series of seeds will bring.

SEEDS OF FAR ADVANCED QUALITY AND OF HIGH VITALITY AVAILABLE EVERY MONTH OF THE YEAR. Connoisseurs' Series seeds are harvested in October and November. When properly stored and refrigerated, delphinium seeds will retain their vitality for more than two years. Seeds harvested in November of 1941 will give perfect germination in the spring and summer of 1942. Thus, perfectly viable Lyondel seeds are available in every month of the year. Furthermore, no matter when he does his purchasing, a Lyondel customer is certain that he will have the delphinium of the future NOW.

The Connoisseurs' Series of seeds are offered under the same classification as the standard series, but will not be ready before the end of November. The price is the same as the standard series. The Lyondel policy has been the following: THE PRICE NEVER GOES UP OR DOWN; THE QUALITY NEVER GOES DOWN BUT ALWAYS UP.

SEEDLINGS THAT ARE SOME SEEDLINGS

In order to meet a persistent demand for seedlings and to reach the small gardener who has place for only a few plants, or those who "simply have no luck with seeds", I am now offering husky, well developed, well grown year-old seedlings for September delivery. Another batch of seedlings from seeds sown last April, will be used for the spring trade. Please do not confuse these with "baby seedlings", those small, tender things that require so much coddling; the plants I am offering are grown-up, can be transplanted directly into the field where they will take care of themselves over winter, and will stand five and six feet tall the following summer. These are available in mixed colors only, and one dozen is the minimum number sold to anyone. For best results these seedlings should not be planted later than the middle of September, or earlier than the first of that month. These seedlings are not picked over, are not discards, but constitute the same quality stock that is used in my own planting. Price, \$3.50 per dozen postpaid.

TERMS

Cash with order. C. O. D. orders not accepted.

AMERICAN DELPHINIUM SOCIETY

In order to keep abreast of the newest developments in the world of delphinium join the American Delphinium Society, R. F. D. Hinsdale, Ill. Dues are two dollars a year. The Yearbook is worth several times the price of membership.

VISITORS

Delphiniums are at their best here in Morgantown about the middle of June, but write for a more definite time before coming. The younger seedlings will bloom in August and September. These are no longer planted at Terra Alta but much closer home along U. S. Route 119, eight miles from Morgantown.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Every year I receive a number of enquiries concerning lectures on delphinium and other garden topics. In order to give a blanket answer in advance, I wish to state that I will be open for a limited number of speaking engagements. The topics are delphinium culture, methods of plant breeding, plant nutrition and growth, and plant diseases. Terms are governed by the distance to be traveled.

